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MEMOIRS

James OF THE Keene
Life and Character

OF

Mr. John Locke.

Mississimæ ingenii Vir! Sic Sentio! J. Keene



L O N D O N:

Printed for F. NOBLE, at Otway's Head in St. Martin's Court, near Leicester-Fields; T. WRIGHT, at the Bible in Exeter-Exchange, Strand; and J. DUNCAN, in St. Martin's Court, near Leicester-Fields. MDCCXLII.

MEMOIRS

OF THE
LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF
MR. JOHN LOCKE



L O N D O N :

Printed for T. Bland, at Oliver's Head in St. Martin's Lane, near the Court, and for J. Widdowes, at the Sign in St. Martin's Lane, near the Court, near the Sign of the Three Kings.



A N
ACCOUNT
OF THE
Life, Character, *and* Writings
O F
Mr. *John Locke.*

MR. JOHN LOCKE was born in the Year 1632, at *Wrington*, near *Bristol*; where he was baptized *August* 29th. His Father's Name was JOHN LOCKE, originally of *Pensford*, in the County of *Buckingham*; a Gentleman well vers'd in the Law, tho' it was not his particular Profession, and a Captain in the Parliament's Army, in the Time of the Civil War; by which, 'tis thought, he lost a great Part of his Substance: For he was reputed a Man of great Probity and Oeconomy,

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and it was well known he received a much larger Estate from his Parents than descended to his Son. He had no Daughters, and only two Sons; the younger died in his Minority, and the elder was our ingenious and learned Author. He imbib'd the first Rudiments of his extraordinary Learning at *Westminster* School. From thence he was remov'd in 1651, to *Christ's-Church* College, *Oxon.* February 14, 1655, he took the Degree of Batchelor of Arts, and that of Master June 29, 1658. The Reading of *Des Cartes* inclin'd him first to the Study of Philosophy. He very much disapproved of the common Course of Studies in the University; "because, says Mr. Bayle, nothing was "taught there but the *Aristotelian* Philosophy, embarrass'd with obscure Terms and useless Questions; "and he had a great Aversion to the Disputes of the "School, at that Time much in Use." However, he vigorously pursued his Studies, applying himself in particular to that of Physic; not with any Design of practising as a Physician, but, perhaps, principally for the Benefit of his own Constitution, which was but weak. Yet his Proficiency in the Science enabled him to be of excellent Use to several of his Acquaintance, particularly to the late famous Earl of *Shaftsbury*, then Lord *Ashley*, with whom he became acquainted while he was at *Oxford*. And we find he gain'd such Esteem for his Skill, even amongst the most eminent Physicians of his Time, that Dr. *Thomas Sydenham*, in his Book entitled, *Observationes Medicæ circa Morborum acutorum Historiam & Curationem*, gives him a high Encomium in these Words: "You know, "says he, likewise, how much my Method has been "approved of by a Person, who has examin'd it to
" the.

“ the Bottom, and who is our common Friend, I
 “ mean, Mr. JOHN LOCKE, who, if we consider
 “ his Genius, and penetrating and exact Judgment,
 “ or the Strictness of his Morals, has scarce any Su-
 “ perior, and few Equals now living.” He was very
 often saluted by his Acquaintance with the Title, tho’
 he never took the Degree, of *Doctor* of Physic. Let
 us now take a View of him in his public Capacity.

Sir *William Swan* being appointed Envoy from the
English Court to the Elector of *Brandenburg*, and some
 other *German* Princes, Mr. LOCKE attended him in
 the Quality of his Secretary, 1664, and returning to
England again, within the Year, he re-apply’d him-
 self to his Studies, and, in particular, to that of Natural
 Philosophy.

In 1668, the Earl of *Northumberland* intending a
 Journey to *Rome*, Mr. LOCKE accompany’d him into
France, with his Countess, whom he left with Mr.
 LOCKE when he proceeded on his Journey. But, upon
 their receiving the News of the Earl’s Death before he
 reached his Port, they return’d to *England*.

Mr. LOCKE still retain’d his Student’s Place at *Christ’s-
 Church, Oxon*, where he sometimes resided, but most-
 ly at the Lord *Ashley’s*, then Chancellor of the *Exche-
 quer*. In the Years 1670, and 71, he enter’d upon writ-
 ing his *Essay on Human Understanding*, but the Inter-
 vention of other Affairs hinder’d him from finishing it
 at that Time. It is suppos’d to be about this Time he
 was made a Fellow of the Royal Society.

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In 1672, his noble Friend and Patron, Lord *Ashley*, now Earl of *Shaftsbury*, and Lord Chancellor of *England*, made him Secretary of the Presentations; but upon the Earl's resigning the Great Seal, 1673, Mr. LOCKE was deprived of his Place: For they had both render'd themselves obnoxious to the Court, by watching the Steps, and opposing the Designs of the Catholick Party; which they fail'd not afterwards to pursue as far as they were able. Yet Mr. LOCKE was made Secretary to a Commission of Trade, in the same Year, a Place said to be worth Five Hundred Pounds *per Annum*. but the Commission being dissolv'd, *December* 1674, he was again stripp'd of his Office, and *February* the 6th following he took the Degree of Batchelor of Physick.

In the Summer Season, 1675, finding himself something consumptive, he went to *Montpellier*, in *France*, for the Sake of his Health; where he stay'd some Time, and where, as well as at *Paris* in his Return, he contracted an Acquaintance with several of the most famous Men of that Kingdom.

In 1679, the Earl of *Shaftsbury* was restor'd to Favour at Court, and constituted President of the Council, whereupon he sent for Mr. LOCKE to *London*, but not long after the Earl was depriv'd of his Post, and committed to the Tower, and being discharg'd, *December* 1682, he retir'd to *Holland*. Mr. LOCKE soon after follow'd him thither, and after he had been several Months absent he was accus'd at Court of having libell'd the Government in certain Tracts, which afterwards proved to be writ by another Person, but however he was prosecuted so far in his Absence as to be depriv'd

priv'd of his Place of Student at *Christ's-Church*. King *Charles II.* dying *February 6, 1685*, Mr. *William Pen*, who had contracted an Acquaintance with him at *Christ-Church*, made use of his Interest with King *James II.* to procure his Pardon, and had certainly succeeded, had not Mr. LOCKE, perhaps, a little too hastily answer'd, "He had no Occasion for a Pardon, since he had not been guilty of any Crime."

May 1685, King *James* understanding the Duke of *Monmouth* was in *Holland* with several *English* Gentlemen, preparing for an Invasion, he caus'd his Envoy at the *Hague* to demand of the States-General to deliver up Eighty Four Persons, amongst whom Mr. LOCKE was included under the Stile of *the Earl of Shaftsbury's Secretary*; tho' he always lived with the Earl as a Friend, and not as a Servant: His Name was suppos'd indeed to have been insert'd by the *English* Consul, for it was said he was not included in the King's List. However, notwithstanding he had been so precautions as to leave *Amsterdam* a considerable Time before, to avoid being charged with having any Share in the Duke of *Monmouth's* Enterprize, he was oblig'd to flee from Place to Place, and secret himself amongst the Friends his excellent Qualifications had gain'd him in that Country. After the Storm was blown over he return'd to *Amsterdam*, and, in the Year 1687, he constituted a Weekly Assembly of the most learned and ingenious Men there, for the Sake of conversing upon Subjects of Importance: Amongst whom were Mr. *Le Clerc* and Mr. *Limborch*.

February

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February 1689, he return'd to *England* in the Fleet appointed to convoy the Princess of *Orange*. It is said he might easily have obtain'd a very considerable Post under King *William*, but he chose to content himself with that of Commissioner of Appeals, worth little more than two hundred Pounds *per Annum*. The King would gladly have honoured him with a Public Character, and accordingly offered him his Choice at what Court it would be most suitable to his Health and Inclination to reside as an Envoy. But he handsomely excus'd himself from accepting the Offer, upon the Account of his ill State of Health.

In 1695, he was appointed one of the Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, a Place reputed worth a thousand Pounds a Year. In this Office he acquitted himself with Honour till 1700, and then resign'd it, by Reason of his Astmatic Disorder, which render'd him unable to bear the Air of *London* any longer.

The last Fourteen or Fifteen Years of his Life, he pass'd at Sir *Francis Maffham's* Country Seat (about Twenty Five Miles distant from *London*) call'd *Oates*, in the County of *Essex*. How he spent his Time in this Retirement, Mr. *P. Coste*, a Gentleman very intimate with him, and much in his Company, gives the following Relation: " During this agreeable Retirement, *says he*, he apply'd himself especially to the
 " Study of the holy Scripture; and employ'd the last
 " Years of his Life in hardly any Thing else. He was
 " never weary of admiring the great Views of that sacred Book, and the just Relation of all its Parts; He
 " every Day made Discoveries in it, that gave him
 " fresh

“ fresh Cause of Admiration. It is strongly reported
 “ in *England*, that those Discoveries will be commu-
 “ nicated to the Public. If so, the whole World, I
 “ am confident, will have a full Proof of what was ob-
 “ served by all that were near Mr. LOCKE to the last
 “ Part of his Life; I mean, that his Mind never suf-
 “ fer’d the least Decay, tho’ his Body grew every Day
 “ visibly weaker and weaker.”

The Beginning of Summer was generally a Time
 of Restoration to him, with Regard to his Health; but
 at the Return of that Season, immediately before his
 Decease, he found his Strength fail him to such a De-
 gree, that he often said, tho’ with great Composure,
 he fore-saw his End was nigh. At length, his Legs
 began to swell, and as the Swelling increased his
 Strength diminished. In his Sicknefs he declared, “ He
 “ was in the Sentiments of perfect Charity towards all
 “ Men, and of a sincere Union with the Church of
 “ CHRIST under whatever Name distinguish’d.” He
 exhorted Lady *Masham*, who sat by his Bed, to “ re-
 “ gard this World only as a State of Preparation for
 “ a better.” He frequently recommended the dili-
 gent Reading of the Scriptures to such as were present
 with uncommon Ardency, and appeared to have a
 deep and grateful Sense of the Blessings God had fa-
 voured him with, which he delighted to enumerate to
 his Friends, declaring his Resignation to the Will of
 God, and his firm Hopes in his Promises. *October*
26, 1704, Mr. *Cofte* found him in his Closet upon his
 Knees, but so weak, he was unable to rise without
 Assistance. The next Day he continued in Bed, and
 desiring to be remembered at Evening-Prayers, Lady

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Masham told him, if he pleas'd, the whole Family should come and pray by him in his Chamber, which he gladly accepted. He then gave some necessary Orders with much Serenity, and an Occasion offering to mention the Goodness of God, he mightily extoll'd the Greatness of that Love that died to open a Way for the Restoration of Mankind; crying out, O, the

Pray mark
this Well —
Reader! —

Indeed I think,
from the Bottom
of my Soul — that
this point alone,
Even the Dying
Love of Jesus X.
our Saviour, is
Enough to Over-
come, & fill the
Heart, of every
Sincere Seeker
after Truth, with
the highest &
Truest Gratitude,
& with the deepest
Adoration of such
an Unspeakable
Demonstration
of the Love and
Goodness of God
to poor Lost, Bewildered Man!

Sic sentio!
I Keene.
1745.

— Depth of the Riches of the Goodness and Knowledge of God! And was extremely thankful that he was called to the Knowledge of his divine Saviour. He likewise press'd those about him to read the Scriptures attentively, and to apply themselves sincerely to the Practice of all their Duties; adding, "By this Means you will be more happy in this World, and secure to yourselves the Possession of eternal Felicity in the other." Lady Masham offering to sit up with him, he would not suffer her, but told her if he perceived himself change, he would have her call'd. He slept none that Night; but in the Morning desired to rise. Accordingly he was carried into his Study, and placed in an easy Chair, where he sometimes doz'd and slept a little. Whereupon, seeming to be something refresh'd, he was dress'd in the Manner he lately used, and took a little Small-Beer; and hearing Lady Masham reading the Psalms in a low Voice, he desir'd she would read louder, which she did, and to which he gave great Attention, till feeling the Pains of Death approach, he desir'd her to break off, and expir'd presently after, October 28, 1704. in the seventy third Year of his Age.

He was a Man of the most extensive Knowledge that, perhaps, this Nation has produc'd. Deep in Penetration,

The above mention'd passages, plainly proves the Intire falshood of that Vilanous report, which I have often met with — viz^t. that He was a Modern Freethinker — or a Deist in principle — and Consequently — they have Triumph'd greatly (tho' very falsely) in having as they said, so Great

of Mr. JOHN LOCKE. II

Penetration, and solid in Judgment. No Man understood Business, Books, and Men better than Mr. LOCKE. He was a true Philosopher, i. e. a Lover of Wisdom, and no less a Despiser of Cunning. He was obliging, affable, and facetious. The Gentleman appeared as beautiful in him as the Philosopher. He was grave, free and cheerful in Sickness as well as in Health. He would frequently ridicule that Affectation of

Preciseness and Austerity, apparent in some Pretenders to Philosophy, as well as to Religion, which renders them so ridiculous, by displaying their Vanity and Self-Conceit to the World. He much admired that Maxim

of Rochefaucault, That Preciseness is a Mystery of the Body invented to conceal the Defects of the Mind. He

was a great Lover of solid Truths, and good Reasoning; wisely applying his Reason to every Thing, to try its real Worth and Service; which rendered him a hearty Despiser of Plays, Romances, and all the idle, indecent, and hurtful Whimfies of the blindly ador'd

Ancients, as well as the conceited modern Versifiers. He had likewise a great Aversion to the Works of little Dabblers, and Dealers in useless Hypotheses, and all

such as trifle away their own, and their Reader's Time in Criticisms upon Words, and Things of no Importance. Mr. Coste informs us, " he was naturally

" something Choleric; but his Anger never lasted

" long. If he retained any Resentment, it was against himself, for having given Way to so ridiculous a Passion; which, as he used to say, may do

" a great deal of Harm, but never yet did the least Good." Sic Sentio!

One Method he took to improve himself in the Knowledge of useful Arts, was by accommodating him-

This is an Excellent B² Method - and what I have Endeavoured to practise, ever since I read this Ac^t of Him. and have found it answer my End, and Expectation, for the most part.

their Opinion.

Mark this!
And I cannot help doing so - sometimes myself.

So it is - I am very certain and have long seen, & fully thought.

I think and I never yet found it, but amongst weak minded, bigotted narrow-spirited People.

NB!

Went
1749

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self to the Reach of all Capacities: "With a Gardener, says Mr. Coste, he would talk of Gardening; with a Jeweller, of a Diamond; with a Chymist, of Chymistry, &c. By this, said he himself, I please all those Men, who commonly can speak pertinently upon nothing else. As they believe I have an Esteem for their Profession, they are charm'd with shewing their Abilities before me; and I, in the mean while, improve myself by their Discourse."

A very Wise, and Excellent Observation, I think!

The Generality of Authors are stiffly tenacious of their own Conceits; he knew, *Humanum est errare*, and so I do off to be a Truth, and therefore steer'd in a different right well. Channel, declaring, "he should always be glad to prefer Truth to any of his Opinions." *Sic fento!*

It must be acknowledg'd, he had one Notion which was very uncourtly; i. e. *He would not hold an Employment without doing the Duties of it.* And what is very uncommon, he acted accordingly. For when his Astmatic Disorder had rendered him incapable to act with his wonted Regularity in his Office, he privately resigned it up to the King, tho' a Place of a thousand Pounds *per Annum*. And when he was reproach'd with it by some Person of Honour, no Question, he reply'd, "he very well knew, he might have made an Advantage of it; and this was the very Reason why he communicated his Design to no Body. Adding, I received this Place from the King himself, and to him I resolved to restore it, to dispose of it as he thought proper."

His

of Mr. JOHN LOCKE. 13

His Writings are 1. A Register of the Changes of Air observed at *Oxford* by the Barometer, Thermometer, and Hydrometer, from *June 24, 1666, to March 28, 1667.* 2. A Letter concerning Toleration. 3. A Second Letter on the same Subject. 4. A Third on the same. 5. A Fourth left unfinished, and publish'd amongst his posthumous Works. 6. Several Pieces in the Second Tome of the *Bibliothèque Universelle.* 7. An Essay concerning Human Understanding. 8. Two Treatises of Government. In the former the false Principles of Sir *Robert Filmer*, and his Followers are detected and overthrown. The latter is an Essay concerning the true Original, Extent, and End of civil Government. 9. Some Considerations of the Consequences of the lowering of Interest, and raising of the Value of Money, in a Letter to a Member of Parliament. 10. Some Observations on a printed Paper, entitled, *For encouraging coining Silver-Money in England, &c.* 11. Further Observations concerning raising the Value of Money, &c. 12. Some Thoughts concerning Education. 13. The Reasonableness of Christianity as delivered in the Scriptures. This Book was extremely offensive to the corrupt and selfish Part of the Clergy, both high and low, its Doctrine, it seems, bent too strongly against the Foundation of their two favourite Idols, Power and Interest, by teaching *Salvation by Christ alone.* The generous Mr. *Samuel Bold*, Rector of *Steeple* in *Dorset*, appeared in its Favour, and notwithstanding the Opposition of his Brethren, ingeniously observes, " Were the Reasonableness of Christianity, &c. generally read with Deliberation, and " rightly understood, and (what I apprehend to be) " its main Design well follow'd, it would be of eminent

Mark well!
Sic sentio!
W

nent

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“ nent Use, amongst other good Purposes, to these two;
 “ first, to effect an happy Alteration in particular Per-
 “ sons: For if more Time and Pains were employ’d in
 “ bringing People to a sound Conviction, and full Per-
 “ swasion that *JESUS is the CHRIST*, and *only Savi-*
 “ *our* of Sinners, and of their own personal Need of
 “ him; and less of each in squabbling about Terms
 “ *Men have devis’d to express’d their own Conceits* re-
 “ lating to Points, which *CHRIST* and his Apostles
 “ have deliver’d in easy and unaffected Words; there
 “ would not be such great Numbers every where who
 “ pretend to be Christians merely because it is the Fa-
 “ shion and Mode of the Country to make that Pro-
 “ fession, but we might, upon good Grounds, expect,
 “ that Multitudes would be *Christians* upon a *rational*
 “ and *wise Choice.*” *Sic Sentio! Valde probo!*

IK-

14. A Vindication of the Reasonableness of Christi-
 tianity, &c. 15. A Second Vindication of the Rea-
 sonableness of Christianity. 16. A Letter to the Right
 Reverend *Edward* Lord Bishop of *Worcester*, concern-
 ing some Passages relating to Mr. *LOCKE*’s Essay on
 Human Understanding, &c. 17. Reply to the Right
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 ply to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of *Worces-*
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 mous Works of Mr. *LOCKE*, containing 1. The Con-
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